

Tal av utrikesministern vid SIPRI- seminarium om kärnvapennedrustning, 4 april 2016 (Från regeringskansliets hemsida)

Foreign Minister Wallström's Speech at Sipri Conference "Nuclear Disarmament: Revisiting the Legacy of Olof Palme" 4 april 2016. Talet hölls på engelska. Det talade ordet gäller.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

Welcome to this seminar on nuclear disarmament, a commemorative event marking the 30th anniversary of Olof Palme's assassination.

I am particularly pleased that Deputy Secretary-General Jan Eliasson will deliver the keynote speech, given his personal experience of working closely with Prime Minister Olof Palme. I would also like to extend a special welcome to all the distinguished members of the panel, and a very special thanks to the staff of SIPRI for organising this event, in particular Dan Smith and Tariq Rauf.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

As a committed internationalist, Olof Palme believed that Sweden – a military non-aligned country with a high degree of credibility with nations great and small – could and should play a special role as mediator and honest broker for international peace and security.

One of Olof's last speeches was in New Delhi, in January 1986. It

was his Indira Gandhi Memorial Lecture. He spoke about international security and devoted a large part of his speech to the threat of nuclear war.

He spoke about the devastation caused by the bombs over Hiroshima and Nagasaki. The terrifying immediate effects and the long-term, irrevocable consequences.

He pointed out, and I quote:

"A nuclear war can hit all peoples and all States, even those who are furthest away from the theatre of war. But this also means that all peoples and all nations have a right to have a say about these weapons of mass destruction."

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

I have met survivors from Hiroshima. They described the horrors of the bomb and the after-effects they themselves – and generations to come – have to live with. Nuclear arms are diabolic in their range. They spread pain and suffering over space and time. They reach over vast geographic spaces and further into the future than the human mind can grasp.

Today we see with great concern how new nuclear arms are being developed and used as a threat, and that there are no ongoing nuclear arms reduction negotiations involving the two largest nuclear-weapon States despite the attempts of the Obama administration.

As Olof Palme pointed out in New Delhi: We who live in nuclear-weapon-free States, and our future, are obviously threatened by the nuclear arms race.

It is therefore our right, as well as our duty, to make firm demands for nuclear disarmament.

Building on Sweden's proud tradition as a constructive actor in nuclear disarmament, our Government has re-engaged in the international work against nuclear arms:

- We have joined the Humanitarian Initiative, and re-joined the De-alerting Group. We actively pursue new disarmament measures in the re-established Open-ended Working Group under the UNGA.
- We work tirelessly to support verification of disarmament. Sweden is co-chair of the technical cooperation project initiated by the US, together with Nuclear Threat Initiative (NTI), regarding exactly this.
- Recently we announced that we will appoint a special ambassador for international disarmament efforts.
- And I have just returned from the Nuclear Security Summit (NSS) in Washington DC, regarding how we can strengthen international cooperation to secure and protect nuclear materials and prevent nuclear terrorism. This is important, urgent and prioritised.

These are just a few examples. We have appointed a Swedish Delegation on International Law and Disarmament, and one of its tasks is to suggest concrete steps for further efforts for international disarmament.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

In New Delhi, 30 years ago, Olof Palme stressed the importance of stopping all nuclear tests.

Ten years later, in 1996, the Comprehensive Nuclear-Test-Ban Treaty, the CTBT, opened for signature. So far 183 countries have signed and 164 have ratified it, including three of the nuclear-weapon States: France, the Russian Federation and the United Kingdom. It is high time that all States that possess nuclear weapons join the Treaty and that they make good on their NPT disarmament commitments.

The existence of the CTBT, and the legacy of Olof Palme, show that change is possible, even in difficult areas such as nuclear disarmament. So now it is time for us nuclear-weapon-free States to initiate the next step. There is a need for additional international rules and tools to make all nuclear-weapon possessor States disarm. This could include a prohibition, a convention or a framework agreement on nuclear weapons.

A sustainable future for humanity and our planet cannot include nuclear arms. One day, when humanity has achieved the elimination of nuclear weapons, future generations will look back on us, and call us crazy. They will wonder how we could even permit these weapons to exist.

Excellencies, Ladies and Gentlemen,

To conclude, as most of you know, Sweden has put forward its candidacy for a seat in the United Nations Security Council in 2017–2018. In the disarmament field, following our successful contribution for example to the Arms Trade Treaty, we think we can play an active role in the Council's important work.

With these words, let me once again welcome you to this event. It is now my great pleasure to give the floor to Jan Eliasson, the Deputy Secretary-General of the UN, who will give the keynote speech.

Thank you.